



# Gylden Magick

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## July 2023

PRACTICAL MAGICK & UNIVERSAL ENERGY FOR EVERYDAY LIFE

## Editor's notes

by Gylden Fellowship

Welcome to **GYLDEN MAGICK** – the spiritual magazine from Gylden Fellowship that spans both traditional and newer pagan beliefs and practice.

Dear readers of **GYLDEN MAGICK**,

It's July (the Mead Moon) – and this issue of **GYLDEN MAGICK** has a definite emphasis on summer and the start of **Lammas** on 1 August (or Lughnasadh, if you prefer).

As we approach the end of our fifth year of publication, we're always pleased when authors want to continue their articles or new authors come along. From September 2023, there'll

be more from **Joanna** on forest bathing and celestial forecasts, crystal and historical articles from **Charlie Foreverdark**, meta-science from **Mark** and extra environmental pieces from a selection of nature writers. All this in addition to our regular features!

Lammas happens right at the end of July, which is why there's some blessings here. Other notable dates for diaries in July **are the Feast of Cerridwen** on 3 July, **Festival of Sleipnir** on 26 July **and the Feast of Thor** on 29 July. Don't forget 3 July for the **next full moon**.

The picture above reminds us that **the Islamic New**

**Year 2023** — also known as the Arabic New Year or Hijri New Year — begins on the first day of Muharram, the first month in the Islamic calendar.

The Islamic calendar is lunar-based and only 354 days long. Islamic New Year falls **on 18 July** of the Gregorian calendar this year.

Thank you for all your feedback and many blessings.

**Gylden Fellowship admins**

For more info, why not join **Gylden River LRC** or **Gylden Fellowship** groups on Facebook today and see our archives or new briefings?

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# Lughnasadh/ Lammass: Blessings & notes

By Gylden Fellowship

This is a Celtic fire festival, named for the Commemoration of Lugh in Irish Gaelic. As the Celtic day started with sunset, the celebration of Lughnasadh starts on the Monday eve before Tuesday 1 August 2023.

Lugh was a member of the Irish pantheon, the Tuatha De Danann. His father was Cian (son of Danu) and his foster-mother was Tailtiu. Lugh was linked to skills, crafts, arts and war - his name means "many skilled" or "the shining one" and he was thought to be a sun god, recognised generally by the Celts, rather than located in a specific region. The Gaulish Lugos is connected to the Irish Lugh, who is sometimes linked with the Welsh hero, Lleu Llaw Gyffes.

Much of the early history of Ireland is recorded in the *Book of Invasions*, namely the times when Ireland was conquered by foreign enemies. This record says that Lugh came to be associated with grain in Celtic legends after he held a harvest fair in honour of his foster mother. So, Lugh is symbolised by corn, grains, bread and other harvest fruits. In Irish Gaelic, the word for August is lúnasa and this festival was called Lughnasadh.

Later, Christians renamed the festival as Lammass, derived from the Old English (Anglo-Saxon) word of *hlaef-mass*. This refers to the loaf mass, when the first loaf of bread from the new harvest is consecrated – in the *Anglo-Saxon Chronicles*, Lammass was described as the Feast of the First Fruits. Julius Caesar listed the popular deities of the Gauls and referred to them by what he saw as a corresponding Roman name. Thus, references made to Lugh (or Lugos) were attributed to the Roman god, Mercury. The central city for the worship of Mercury was Lugundum, which later became Lyon in France. Mercury's festival on 1 August was chosen as the day of the Feast of Augustus, by Caesar's successor, Octavian Augustus Caesar, and it became the most important holiday in Gaul. However, 1 August tied in with the first grain harvest in most rural societies in Europe.

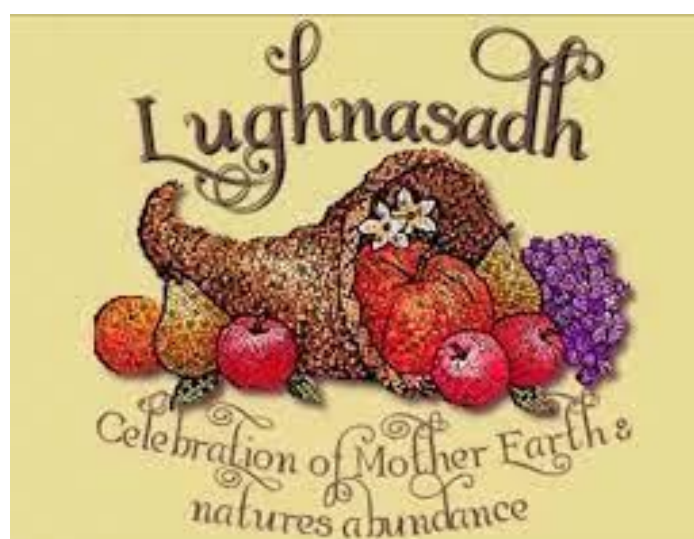
In real terms, Lughnasadh shows the beginning of the descent of the sun into winter darkness, but it's also about celebrating the first harvest of the year. Much of the harvest is collected and stored and winter is not far away. So, both the Celts and the Saxons cut the grain for bread, but also stored some away as seeds for the next crop in the following spring.

This is Lughnasadh – a time to give thanks for the first harvest and to reflect upon our blessings. Are there any ways in which we can improve our lives and can we learn from our surroundings? In the days ahead, take a walk and look for evidence of the ripening harvest – in fields of grain, in orchards and in the hedges.

The harvest fruits include corn, forest fruits and seeds, fruits of the sea, herbs and flowers, but it is the seed that is the ancient symbol of life growing up to the point of harvest. Each of you, turn outward and consider the circle of life, take a moment to ground yourself and count the positive things in your lives that have grown from tiny seeds. And we too can

reflect upon the meanings of transformation, death and rebirth at this sabbat. In practical terms, a Lughnasadh celebration might include.

- Using grain sheaves to create figures.
- Decorating a tree or natural feature with flowers.
- Baking something with flour.
- Holding a picnic with lots of laughter and song.
- Sharing songs, dances, stories and communal joy.
- Discussing new projects or seeds to be sown in spring.
- Collecting seed heads for sowing in the spring.



Lughnasadh is the grain harvest that provides the basic food that will sustain us through the winter. It is important to recognise that this grain is also the seed that becomes next year's harvest – the seed lives on and completes the cycle. The festival allows us the opportunity to give thanks to the Goddess for her abundance and for our personal harvests. As the sun's energy begins to wane, we acknowledge what we have learned during our periods of growth this year and reflect on our achievements. We can start to think about how this progress can move forward as seeds for next year. In Saxon times, the work of gathering in the grain harvest was hard and, afterwards, the community came together to celebrate by baking new loaves from the new grain, feasting and revelry.

*For the sun we mourn*

*As he shall wane.*

*The crops remain.*

*Through kern and corn,*

*The harvest born,*

*Shall life return.*

*Our Mother Earth*

*Now brings birth*

*The life poured forth*

*In light and warmth.*

*(Rae Beth, 1982)*

*Our Lord and Lady you shall provide,*

*Long after all has withered and died.*

*Though you have given us life from these lands,*

*What we know are the works of our hands.*

*We shall remember, just like the corn,*

*That we ever live, die and are reborn.*



Gylden  
Magick  
July  
2023

# Hrafnseati festival of Vikings, Saxons & Slavs

Collated by Gylden Fellowship









# Cosmic energies: asteroids

By Mark Sharpen

Tuesday 27 June 2023 was predicted as the peak of the **Bootids Meteor Shower**; if they are visible at all this year. Although they are not active every year, they can occur any time between 22 June and 2 July. Further to that, Friday 30 June 2023 was **International Asteroid Day**. And it's asteroids that are the focus of this piece. Let's start with some definitions.

1. **An asteroid** is a rocky, metallic or icy object, not a comet, that orbits within the inner Solar System.
2. **A comet** is an icy, small Solar System body that warms and begins to release gases when passing close to the Sun, a process called outgassing.
3. **A meteor** is what happens when a small piece of an asteroid or comet, called a meteoroid, burns up upon entering Earth's atmosphere.

Asteroids have no atmospheres. Sizes and shapes of asteroids vary significantly, ranging from 10m rocks to a dwarf planet of almost 500m in diameter. The purpose of International Asteroid Day is to raise public awareness and educate people about the opportunities and risks presented by asteroids. No-one knows how long asteroids have been floating around in the Solar System, but scientists believe that they go back tens of millions of years. Added together, the total mass of all current asteroids in our Solar System would be less in size than the Earth's moon. Here's some more interesting asteroid facts.

1. Can asteroids have moons? At least 150 asteroids have been identified by scientists as having small, companion moons and even two moons.
2. Have asteroids ever hit our planet? The most recent asteroid to hit earth was in 2013 when it entered as a fireball over Russia and exploded over the city of Chelyabinsk.
3. So, where is the asteroid belt? The main asteroid belt in our solar system is located in a region between the planets of Mars and Jupiter.
4. Do we know how many asteroids are out there? Not sure on this one, but scientists have counted over 1 million asteroids.

It is estimated that, some 65 million years ago, an enormous asteroid fell to the earth in the area that is presently Yucatan, Mexico. This is referred to as the **Chicxulub impact** and some scientists think this may be what contributed to the extinction of the dinosaurs. This asteroid may have been the size of some small countries and left a crater that was somewhere around 150km in size where a rim of mountains the size of the Himalayas formed around the edge.

More recently, the **Tunguska Event** occurred in a Siberian desert area in 1908. This explosion happened in the area, now known as Krasnoyarsk Krai, was classified as an impact event. Though no impact crater was left behind, this asteroid is believed to have

disintegrated in the earth's atmosphere before hitting the surface. The Tunguska Event is the largest asteroid impact event to have been recorded in human history, with eyewitness reports that were gathered afterward. The most recent asteroid event (see picture below), also happened in Russia in 2013, in an area in western Siberia, known as **Chelyabinsk**. No one died or was injured directly from the small asteroid that exploded prior to landing, but many injuries were reported from the side effects of the blast.



International Asteroid Day was founded by Stephen Hawking and a collection of other people, including an Apollo 9 astronaut, a filmmaker, and Brian May – who was the guitarist for Queen and also an astrophysicist. The date of 30 June was chosen as it is the anniversary of the 1908 incident in Siberia. The day officially launched in 2014 with the support of more than 200 astronauts. It took two more years before it was officially recognised by the United Nations in 2016. OK then, here's **an overview** of notable asteroid events.

1. **65 million years ago: the Chicxulub Event** - perhaps the reason that dinosaurs no longer roam the earth, this asteroid was roughly 10-80km in size and hits earth in what is modern day Mexico.
2. **1908: Tunguska Event in Siberia** – an asteroid hits remote parts of Russia and has an impact of 800 square miles.
3. **1989: Galileo spacecraft is launched** – the first spacecraft to orbit an outer planet, Galileo is also the first to observe an asteroid from a short distance.
4. **2013: small asteroid hits Russia** - the first asteroid event on Earth in the 21st century, this one was only 20m in diameter and it explodes while still approximately 30km in the air, though it did still cause a fair share of damage.
5. **2016: International Asteroid Day is recognised by UN** - originally initiated by Stephen Hawking and a group of others supporters, International Asteroid day was declared official by the United Nations General Assembly.

Events and activities for International Asteroid Day are located in communities all over the world. Whether attending a lecture, watching a programme on TV about Asteroid Day or reading a paper to learn more about the possibilities and preparedness that may be vital in the future, this day is a great time for it.

In addition to simply attending an event, some people might want to volunteer. Events are organised by museums, universities, schools, clubs, space agencies and educators all over the world. The list of officially sanctioned events can be found on the official [Asteroid Day website](#), with activities listed as happening in hundreds of cities on all of the inhabited continents.

Those who don't have events taking place in their local area might want to consider hosting one. Invite local scientists to participate through lectures and discussions. Or get some local musicians to host a benefit concert in support of the day. After all, one of the founding members of the day is astrophysicist and guitarist, Brian May, so the theme of music runs deeply here! If hosting an event, don't forget to officially register it with the Asteroid Day website so other interested parties in the local area can also get involved.



# Environment: news on the Ivory Act 2018

By Nic the Witch and the International Fund for Animal Welfare UK

Here's some interesting environmental news, originally based on a snippet from the Guardian and filled out by Gylden Fellowship. **The Ivory Act, passed in 2018 and enacted in 2022**, severely restricts the export, import and sale of items made from elephant ivory. Announced on 23 May 2023, five endangered CITES-listed species are to receive similar legal protections under the Ivory Act 2018 – these species are known for exploitation of their tusks and teeth.

- Hippopotamus
- Walrus
- Narwhal
- Orca
- Sperm Whale.

Hippopotamus is the species most at risk from the trade in its ivory after elephants. The other species are already threatened by climate change and the continuing trade in their ivory may exacerbate these threats and make their long-term survival less likely. Frances Goodrum, head of campaigns and programmes at **the International Fund for Animal Welfare UK**, said:

*"[We] are encouraged by early indications that the ban is having a significant impact on the trade in elephant ivory, yet other species are still poached globally to meet an unnecessary demand for luxury ivory products, including the hippopotamus, walrus, narwhal, sperm whale and killer whale. We welcome Defra's decision to extend this powerful legislation, which will go a long way in cracking down on a damaging trade. Today is a good day for conservation and a step change towards international commitments to safeguard our natural world."*

This statutory guidance explains the enforcement framework and civil sanctions that apply when someone commits an offence under the Ivory Act 2018, which bans people from dealing in ivory. It applies to anyone who deals in ivory, or causes, arranges or helps someone else to deal in ivory, such as the following.

- any member of the public
- businesses and their employees, such as a director, manager, partner or secretary
- members of an organisation where the members manage its functions
- people who want to import or export ivory into and out of the UK.

An offence under the Ivory Act 2018 applies to both a seller and a buyer of an ivory item, as well as to anyone involved in the dealing in other ways. For example, if you arrange a sale of

an ivory item, provide advertising of an ivory item or keep an ivory item in a shop for sale. The definition of dealing is shown below.

- Buying ivory
- Selling ivory or keeping ivory for sale
- Hiring ivory or keeping ivory for hire
- Offering or arranging to buy, sell or hire ivory
- Exporting ivory from the UK for sale or hire
- Importing ivory into the UK for sale or hire.

It should be noted that there are 5 categories of ivory items that may be exempt from the ban, if they meet specific criteria.

- Pre-1918 items of outstanding artistic, cultural or historical value and importance
- Pre-1918 portrait miniatures
- Pre-1947 items with low ivory content
- Pre-1975 musical instruments
- Acquisitions made by qualifying museums.

**Note:** if you have an ivory item that you think falls into one of the exemption categories, you can apply to the Animal and Plant Health Agency (APHA) for an exemption certificate for pre-1918 items of outstanding artistic, cultural or historical value and importance or for registration in the case of other exempt items.



## Poetry: Fear of the Dark

By Nicola Ison

Scared now and on the verge of panic,  
Nobody to call to or contact,  
All alone and awake in the depths of night,  
My fear looms large like a huge shadow,  
Menacing and terrible by its very presence.

Must do something to escape –  
I jump out of bed and look to the window,  
A pale crescent moon shines in the trees,  
It's a very clear night outside,  
Not a single cloud to be seen.

Memo to self - find crystals for the full moon,  
But what to do now about my fear?  
It's still here – dark and intimidating,  
Then I look out again and help is at hand,  
The stars have been switched on.

The heavens are full of twinkly lights,  
Beautiful to see as distant sparkles,  
And I gain strength from these natural lanterns,  
That give me a resolve against my fear –  
I turn back to the bedroom.

The fear is still there, but it has shrunk,  
In the face of me and my real lights of the night,  
Instead of a looming, dark shadow,  
My fear huddles and whimpers in the corner,  
I've learned to switch on the night.

And this lesson vanquishes my fear,  
For this night and every night –  
My fear of the dark loses to the power of light,  
Especially the love-light of the universe –  
I remember to switch on the night in future.



## *Folklore: The Hunting of the Last Unicorn*

**By the Storyteller**

Did you know that the Royal Coat of Arms has both a lion and a unicorn on it – and the unicorn is chained, because all unicorns are fierce animals? However, you won't find wild unicorns in England any more, as they have all been hunted down and this is the tale of the hunt for the last unicorn. It is their horns that are so valuable for the making of magical medicine and we have to go back some 400 years to the reign of King James I of England for this story.

At that time, there was a group of doctors and chemists in London called the Worshipful Company of Apothecaries and they had spies all over the country, looking out for unicorns, but there had been nothing seen for years. Then, one day, a spy on the north-east coast of England sent word that a pair of unicorns had been seen near the small port of Boston in Lincolnshire. There could be no delay – the doctors sent word to the king who called for his most trusted hunter, Lord Simon Barnard of Storrington to lead the hunt.

Lord Simon set off from London with his trackers and an apothecary and, after a few days, they reached Boston and met with the spy. He told them that two unicorns had been seen in the Bladon Forest not far away, but they were easily frightened and could not be seen up close. Lord Simon was not put off – after all, his ancestors had killed the last wolf in England and fought the terrible dragon at Arundel. He had a task from King James and would kill or capture both unicorns and take their horns back to him.

The hunting party approached the forest and started their search and it took many days, because the magical creatures did not want to be hunted and stayed silent in the depths of the forest. Lord Simon was becoming angry and then, he caught a glimpse of white through the trees. He crept closer and there were two pure white unicorns with gleaming horns, almost 4 feet long. Lord Simon went back to his trackers and got his horse and they rode back to the place of the unicorns – which bolted as soon as they heard him coming.

Well, the chase went on all day until, finally, the unicorns could run no more. They were stopped by the sea on one side and the hunters on the other. So they turned and fought the huntsmen (I told you they were fierce creatures) and one of them had the horn broken in the fight. But they were tiring and Lord Simon could sense victory, when suddenly both unicorns turned and ran into the sea, never to be seen again.

Lord Simon picked up the broken horn and took it back to the king, who gave it to him to keep at his home at Parham House in Sussex. If you visit Parham House now, Lady Emily Barnard lives there and the 400-year-old unicorn horn is still kept in the house. As for the unicorns, it is said that they survived and their magic kept them alive until they reached the frozen lands of the Arctic, where they and their children live still – living in the water and with very long horns.

# Crystal clear: Tourmaline

By **Charlie Foreverdark**

Should you find yourself able to source decent coloured tourmaline at a reasonable price – I recommend snapping it up. Tourmaline is available in more colours than any other gemstone and the limitless colour varieties can resemble the full array of other precious stones.

The name comes from the Singhalese words, **tura mali**, which translates to **stone with mixed colours**. An ancient Egyptian legend theorised that this incredible spectrum of colours could be attributed to the tourmaline's journey up to the surface from the centre of the earth, during which they believed that it would pass through a rainbow. On the Moh's scale of hardness, tourmaline sits between 7 and 7.5, making it durable enough for just about any type of jewellery. It is hard enough to weather the rigors of daily wear, so is even a suitable choice for rings.

Tourmalines are composed of crystals *of aluminium boron silicate*. They feature complex and variable compositions, and even very minor changes in the chemical make-up can cause tourmaline to feature completely different colours. Therefore, unicoloured tourmaline is fairly rare. The minor elemental changes from which tourmaline can derive colour include increasing/decreasing levels of sodium, calcium, lithium, copper, magnesium, fluorine, vanadium, chromium, manganese and iron.

1. **Pink tourmaline** is coloured by the trace element of manganese.
2. **Rubellite tourmaline** tends to feature pinks, reds, oranges, browns or even purplish hues. In order to be classified as Rubellite, the specimen will consistently display the same fiery ruby red in artificial light as it does in daylight. However, if the colour is subject to change under different light sources, then the stone is classed as a pink tourmaline, rather than Rubellite. Coveted for its beauty, both pink tourmaline and Rubellite have historically fooled the kings and queens of ancient bygone eras by masquerading as ruby. Many stones in the 17<sup>th</sup> century Russian Crown jewels were initially identified as rubies, but are actually now known to be tourmalines.
3. Sometimes, changes in the composite solution and/or environment cause pink tourmaline to develop a green overgrowth and this is known as, **Watermelon tourmaline**.
4. Yellow and deep earthy brown tourmalines are referred to as **Dravites**. These often feature fairly crude and uninteresting formations. However, Dravites from some localities can be uncharacteristically lustrous and beautifully crystallised. Dravite is named after Dravograd, in Slovenia, the area where it was first identified.
5. Very vivid yellow tourmalines discovered in Malawi are known as **Canary tourmalines**.
6. Green tourmaline is known as **Verdelite** and is coloured by iron or titanium. The most prized green tourmalines are transparent and flawless, with brilliant blue-green hues.
7. **Chrome tourmaline** differs chemically from their green cousins; here, traces of chromium and vanadium (the same elemental make-up which causes the astonishing greens of Brazilian and African emerald) produce the distinct and vivid green shades which set Chrome tourmaline apart from other green varieties of tourmaline.
8. Dark blue tourmaline featuring violet or greenish indigo blue is known as **Indicolite**, but bright neon blue tourmaline is perhaps the most prized of all varieties. Coloured by large amounts of manganese and copper, this variety is known as **Paraiba tourmaline** and was first discovered in the Brazilian state of the same name in 1987. Because of its exceptionally high value, this stone is usually custom cut, and rarely in sizes over 1 carat.



9. Pure black tourmaline is referred to as **Schorl** and is the most common form of tourmaline. This is the variety of tourmaline which most commonly forms in the dense needles within crystals of quartz which are known as *tourmalated quartz*.

Completely colourless tourmaline is known as **Achroite** and is actually one of the rarest varieties of tourmaline. However, as there is not much demand for the stone in jewellery, acquiring a piece tends to be fairly inexpensive. Gemstone aficionados and collectors do value the achroite, as it is very unusual for a tourmaline to display no colour. The name, *achroite*, comes from the Greek, *achroos*, meaning devoid of colour.

Some examples of tourmaline feature a soft and diffused chatoyant effect. Known as **cat's-eye tourmaline**, these are most commonly pink, green or blue. The chatoyancy is softer than and not as pronounced as with chrysoberyl cats-eye. Another phenomenon commonly attributed to examples of tourmaline is *dichroism*. Tourmaline is a strongly dichroic gemstone and, as such, the optic axis and the perpendicular axis can reveal different colours. There are also plenty of examples of pleochroic tourmalines, whereby the crystal will feature more than two colours.

Tourmalines are both pyroelectric and also piezoelectric. They become electrically charged and act as a magnet when exposed to heat and then allowed to cool. This is the phenomenon known as *pyroelectricity* after the Greek word for fire. The crystal will then feature a positive charge at one end and a negative one at the other. Due to the pyroelectric properties, tourmaline crystals were observed to attract dust and ash particles by the natural heating and cooling cycles of day and night. The Dutch were actually familiar with this effect long before the scientific explanation was discovered. They historically used a heated tourmaline to draw up the ash from sepiolite smoking pipes (meerscham pipes).

Tourmaline also becomes charged under pressure, which is the phenomenon known as *piezoelectricity*. This word is derived from the Greek word, piezein, meaning to squeeze, push or press. The polarity is subject to change as the pressure is applied and then relieved. As the charge changes the tourmaline physically oscillates.

The initial discovery of tourmaline is accredited to Spanish conquistadors in Brazil during the 1500s. Green varieties of the stone were discovered off the west coast of Italy in the late 1600s or early 1700s - at the time, these were assumed to be emeralds. Dutch traders first introduced tourmaline from Sri Lanka to the Europeans in the late 17<sup>th</sup> century. And it wasn't until the 1800s that scientists identified tourmaline as a distinct mineral species.

In China, the last Empress of the Ch'ing Dynasty was so enamoured by tourmaline that she bought enormous quantities of Rubellite and pink tourmaline from Californian mines. The stone was used in China for carvings, jewellery and jacket buttons reserved for members of the Imperial Court and wealthy personalities. There remain to this day beautiful examples of Chinese engraved and carved tourmaline figures displayed in museums. These are a testament to the durability and the timeless beauty of the stone.

Tourmalines are found all over the world, from Sri Lanka, Brazil, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Madagascar, to particularly large deposits in Africa (Nigeria, Namibia, Kenya, Mozambique and Tanzania.) Tourmalines are also found in America, mostly in the states of California and Maine. One of the earliest reports of tourmaline in California was in 1892. In fact, tourmaline became known as an American gem through the efforts of Tiffany gemmologist, George F. Kunz, who wrote extensively about the tourmaline deposits of Maine and California. Although there are plentiful

worldwide sources of the mineral, it is considerably rarer to find good quality and finely coloured examples, hence the inherent value.

When it comes to tourmaline as an investment, it is important to know what to look out for. Hue, tone and saturation are the key points for valuing a tourmaline specimen.

1. **Hue** essentially describes the colour sensation perceived by the human eye - colour exists purely as the human eye's interpretation of the light spectrum as it passes through a gemstone. Hue is the component which has the least impact upon quality and value.
2. **Tone** is the lightness/darkness of colour sensation featuring on the gemstone. It is a vital component in judging the quality of a tourmaline specimen. In essence, tone refers to how dark or light a gem appears to the eye. The most valuable tourmalines will feature a medium tone, not too light and not too dark.
3. **Saturation** refers to the depth of the colour. The stones with the most vivid colour saturations are the most valuable tourmalines.

Try to examine the specimen under multiple light sources prior to purchase. Both natural and incandescent lights will cause the hue to appear quite differently. Blue and green hues tend to look best under daylight or white lights, whereas red and pink hues tend to favour incandescent (warm) lighting.

The factor of **clarity** is important too. Some tourmalines will feature internal imperfections – pressure fractures, liquids and other mineral inclusions. Imperfection-free examples of rubellite and pink tourmaline are particularly rare; as a general rule of thumb, value will increase with clarity. However, the uniqueness of a specific inclusion may to the value of the stone.

With all faceted gemstones, the quality of the cut is particularly important to the valuing of the stone. Symmetry is prized over asymmetry, well-placed facets are preferred in order to optimise a perfect light return – the facets should enhance the twinkle of the stone.

To date, tourmaline has never been synthesised in a laboratory. However, that doesn't mean that there isn't an array of tourmaline fakes on the market. Common tourmaline imitations include glass, topaz, andalusite and apatite. Also, tourmaline can be subjected to all manner of unnatural enhancements and treatments in order to artificially improve its apparent quality, namely heating (causes lighter and more desirable colours) or irradiation or oiling to conceal fractures in Rubellites.



# Environment: Beach life

By Sussex Wildlife Trust (photos by Barry Yates, former Rye Harbour Nature Reserve Manager)



Rye Harbour Nature Reserve Discovery Centre



Sea kale



Vipers bugloss and thrift



Yellow-horned poppy

# Shrooms

By Erica Zann

Hi, welcome to more stuff from an elderly resident of a small English village. Witterings is probably about right – talking with friends the other day about things we used to see in daily life, but not so much now. This topic arose after the post office closed down at the other end of town and my local post office was just so crowded. To my mind, post offices can be a community hub, particularly if they have a café nearby.

Strange how conversations with local people often turn into nostalgia – we recalled how the butcher used to make meat deliveries each month – my father had a huge freezer in the garage and the whole month's meat delivery went in there. Other deliveries by local traders included the coalman, the milkman and the man with the grindstone who came by to sharpen the tools or kitchen knives...seems like another world now, when one can order stuff online for next day delivery.

Know that this will probably go down like a lead balloon - I can't help, but be amused when grown men have tantrums like spoilt children. Had an unpleasant conversation with someone I've never met, but we've corresponded online. I asked a few questions about his new course (more about that below) and he lost his rag completely, saying that I was "a typical middle-class, white woman who doesn't know anything about the real world". Someone should have warned him that expressing his anger reveals so much about him, particularly to a clair-sentient like me. Ah well, some men just cannot control their rages.

I remember writing a piece years ago about how new pagans should practise a buyer beware attitude. There's a lot of charlatans around, because paganism is less of a faith and more of a business now. Training is a case in point. Anyone can claim to be an expert on almost anything. There are authorised bodies out there, namely the British Academy of Crystal Healing, the National Institute of Medical Herbalists, Affiliation of Crystal Healing Organisations, etc. Ask an expert to show proof of competence. Some umbrella bodies can help with guidance on local gatherings, such as the PF, the Children of Artemis, the Druidry Network or UK Heathenry.

One very important thing to note about training, particularly so-called **pagan camps or festivals, is that you must check out the organisers beforehand**. Of course, there are tricksters who run events with no real idea of the knowledge being offered, but also these events can attract predators who relish the chance to prey on vulnerable people under the spurious heading of healing or mystical wisdom. Best thing really is to go to events or camps that are organised by mainstream pagan bodies or local moots in which you already have friends.

This was the basis of a recent issue – I realise that many sacred sites charge for public access, such as Stonehenge. But be careful of companies that charge huge fees for glorified package tours to sacred sites without any real reverence for these places. My disagreement was with the organiser who purported to run a Celtic course to several places like Glastonbury for the princely sum of £600 per person, including some type of ritual thrown in. The PF are in the process of discussing a code for sacred sites with the site-owners, to examine the leaving of clouties, care of the stones and package tours for groups of people.

# Maths for fun

## By Mark Sharpen

I was watching the film, *Die Hard With A Vengeance*, last week and thought then that the heroes should have been killed in the park. To disable a bomb, Detective John McClane and his friend had to measure out exactly 4 gallons of water and place the resulting weight on a scale. Their tools were a 3-gallon and a 5-gallon jug and a single fountain. The heroes worked out the solution way too fast, imho, in less than 5 minutes, but artistic licence and all that. Do you know how the problem works?

1. **Fill** the 5-gallon jug.
2. **Use** it to fill the 3-gallon jug, leaving 2 gallons in the 5-gallon jug.
3. **Empty** the 3-gallon jug, and then pour in the 2 remaining gallons from the other jug.
4. **Fill** the now empty 5-gallon jug and pour 1 gallon into the 3-gallon jug.
5. **There** are 4 gallons left in the 5-gallon jug.

**Here's another little conundrum for those of you who like maths.** What is the smallest whole number that is equal to seven times the sum of its digits? The answer to this maths riddle is 21.

**Another one? Using only addition, add eight 8s to get the number 1000.**

**Answer:**  $888 + 88 + 8 + 8 + 8 = 1000$ . This is the kind of number riddle you can work out with times tables, or by simple logic. First, get as close to 1000 as you can (888). From there, it's logical to figure out the rest.

**Last one for now - in reply to a question about the animals on his farm, the farmer says: "I only ever keep sheep, goats, and horses. In fact, at the moment they are all sheep bar three, all goats bar four, and all horses bar five." How many does he have of each animal?**

**Answer:**

The farmer has 3 sheep, 2 goats, and 1 horse. You can solve this maths riddle with a quick hypothetical. Take sheep: we know that there are three animals that are goats and horses, so we suppose there are two goats and one horse. Checking this hypothesis gives us three sheep, which works out because there are four non-goats: three sheep, and one horse!



# Magick: astral travel

By Nic the Witch

There's no easy way to describe this technique – in fact, astral travel is also known as shamanic journeying, vision quests and many more. To be blunt, it's a way of opening your awareness to other planes of existence. And the only way of doing so, is to practise again and again – there's no need for props. Some find that drumming helps, but there's no need for fasting or not drinking fluids. After some practice, it is possible to just shift your mind and move your ka into another dimension – practical tip is to remember to take an alarm clock. There is no time in non-human planes of existence, but you may have other things to do later on that day!

It's always worth remembering that time is a human construct, but shamanic training shows that time and place can be manipulated in the following way.

1. Sit quietly in a natural setting.
2. Look around and focus on one object at a time, such as a tree or a rock or the grass.
3. Don't stare, but let the ambience of the setting suffuse your vision – you'll be aware of a fusion of the natural inputs and an exclusion of the external distractions.
4. Try to listen to the natural rhythms around you and slow down your busy mind. When you do this, you are slowing time, and slowing your perception of time. You may notice the earth's slow breath and, with practice, you'll be able to hear the plants growing – all plants and rocks have their own energies and spirits.
5. Imagine all these rhythms merging and melding together, like a musical experience that only you can hear. Be aware of yourself and your own rhythms within this musical, slow energy.
6. Practise speeding your perceptions up and then slowing things down. Better connectivity allows better insight – when you hear the wind in the trees, you are listening to a force of natural magick. Doing this exercise regularly creates a bridge between you and nature that allows you to understand how to work with time. You will also find your inner wisdom and intuition growing.

OK then, that's a way of simply expanding your natural awareness, but some people are experienced with these techniques and use them to travel to other dimensions for defined purposes, namely to contact spirit guides or the souls

of those who have passed on. If you intend to travel to these realms, I'd suggest the alarm clock again (otherwise you may stay too long), a friend or mentor to begin and your question. Experience has shown me that if you want help from spirits, you need to be courteous and transparent and have a clear sense of what you require.

Let's start with the **Place of Meeting**. Not every magickal practitioner wants to cross into the Otherworld – we're not talking about the spirits of people who've passed over, but the first level is just contacting a spirit who will act as your guide, teacher and friend during this lifetime. I remember writing in an earlier article about totem animals that *"a totem animal is one that is with you for life, both in the physical and spiritual world...though people may identify with different animal guides throughout their lifetimes, it is this one totem animal that acts as the main guardian spirit"*.

Here is something to note – spirits have no real shape. When you first cross over into the Otherworld, a spirit may come to you and it will take a shape that you understand – a shape that reassures you and with which you feel connected. So, if you hate snakes in this life, your spirit guide won't appear to you as a serpent.

The **Place of Meeting** is the initial location when you cross over for the first time. My closest friends know that my first such encounter in this lifetime was with a spirit that took the form of an eagle. We met in the sky and fly together over forests, rivers, mountains, fields and lakes. Each time that I cross over, so we meet again in the sky.

I do not speak to my guide, but if I am not sure about a problem, I imagine the problem whilst on a journey and hope that the guide can let me know a solution. That has happened several times before and I am grateful for the eagle's wisdom and clear vision of de-cluttering a problem. Of course, this is one of the great virtues of eagles and some of its clear sight helps me with perspective in everyday life.

Once, when I asked if this was a real location, I was guided to understand that the landscape below represented the course of many lifetimes and that one experience can spread across many lives. The **Place of Meeting** is different for each traveller – it could be the sea, a meadow, the forest or a mountain. What is important is that you feel comfortable in that space with a being who wants to help you.



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